Rehabilitation of Oustees of Big Dams

2747. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI :

SHRI SURESH KALMANDI :

MISS FRIDA TOPNO :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering proposals to formulate a new policy on resettlement and rehabilitation of oustees of bid dams sites and to protect environmental concerns;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the project involved under this category?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY) : (a) to (c) At present programs for resettlement and rehabilitation of affected persons are presently carried out by the State Governments/project authorities as an integral part of the project based on their own policies which vary from State to State and Project to Project. A draft "National Policy for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Persons affected by Reservoir Projects" was considered by the National Water Board in its 9th meeting held on 19-11-1997. The said Policy has been suitably incorporated in the draft "National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Project Affected Persons and Families."

Objectives of the Draft National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Project Affected Persons are :

— Minimise displacement by exploring non-displacing or less-displacing options.

— Higher income and better standard of living to PAPs.

— Reduce trauma of loss of livelihood systems, productive assets and income sources.

— Promote mutual understanding between PAPs and project authorities through right to information and transparency.

The policy is based on the principle that R & R is the joint responsibility of the State Government and the project authorities, the later bearing the entire

cost of all RR benefits. The policy provides a minimum prescribed package above which the project authorities are free to provide additional benefits. Importance of an adequate grievance redressal and minitoring mechanism is envisaged at local, state and national level.

Government of India has also enacted Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 which lay down procedures for Environment and Forest clearance of the projects and address environmental concerns.

Drying up and Silting of Down-Stream River Beds

2748. SHRI E.BALANANDAN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the big dams and barrages have cuased drying up and silting of down-stream river beds of almost all the rivers in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the effect of the dried up and silted river beds on environment and economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY) : (a) and (b) There is no report of completely drying up and silting of rivers due to construction of dams and barrages. However, there may be reduction in flows in the immediate vicinity down-stram of dams/barrages. Further down-stream the rivers are rejuvenated by the return flows from the irrigation commands. Most of the dams are provided with the river sluices to make releases to meet the requirement of minimum flows for maintaining the river regime.

Due to population pressure and abatrsction for water of various purposes there is a general reduction in the flows of the rivers during the lean season. This reduction of flow leads to reduced pollutant carrying capacity of the rivers in affected reaches and thereby affecting the quality of water in the rivers.

Level of Sub-Soil Water

2749. SHRI P. SOUNDARARAJAN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :